

153

KENNEDY 7/12/71

*Pls - FJ I - Re: What we were
talking about*

LOS ANGELES(CNS)--COUNTY CLERK WILLIAM G. SHARP SAID TODAY AN INVESTIGATION BY HIS OFFICE HAD "FAILED TO DISCLOSE ANY MISHANDLING" OF KEY EXHIBITS IN THE TRIAL OF SIRHAN SIRHAN, CONDEMNED ASSASSIN OF SEN. ROBERT F. KENNEDY.

SHARP SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE FELT THERE WERE "STILL SOME STONES UNTURNED" IN THE PROBE AND NOTED HIS OFFICE WOULD CONTINUE QUESTIONING EMPLOYEES.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY JOSEPH P. BUSCH JR. ANNOUNCED LAST SATURDAY THAT HIS OFFICE HAD UNDERTAKEN AN INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGED TAMPERING WITH THE EXHIBITS -- INCLUDING THE WEAPON PURPORTEDLY USED TO SLAY KENNEDY AND BULLETS TAKEN FROM THE SENATOR'S BODY.

BUSCH SAID HE WAS "TERRIBLY CONCERNED" WITH THE POSSIBILITY THE EXHIBITS HAD BEEN MISHANDED, IN VIOLATION OF A COURT ORDER.

BUSCH, MEANWHILE, WAS SCHEDULED TO MEET THIS AFTERNOON WITH CHIEF DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY JOHN HOWARD TO GO OVER THE INVESTIGATION TO DATE. HOWARD IS CONDUCTING THE PROBLE UNDER BUSCH'S SUPERVISION.

THE ORIGINAL INVESTIGATION BY BUSCH'S OFFICE WAS PROMPTED BY ATTORNEY BARBARA WARNER BLEHR, WHO WROTE TO THE CITY CIVIL SERVICE COMISSION SEEKING TO BLOCK THE APPOINTMENT OF CRIMINALIST DEWAYNE (CAPS D W) WOLFER AS PERMANENT HEAD OF THE POLICE CRIME LABORATORY.

THE ATTORNEY CHARGED THAT THERE WERE IRREGULARITIES IN THE BALLISTICS INVESTIGATION OF KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION WHICH WAS CONDUCTED BY WOLFER.

DURING THE COURSE OF THE REVIEW OF HER CHARGES, BUSCH SAID, THE POSSIBILITY OF UNAUTHORIZED ACESSTO THE EXHIBITS WAS DISCOVERED.

HE CHARGED IN HIS STATEMENT SATURDAY THAT COURT ORDERS SEALING THE EXHIBITS "HAD BEEN IGNORED AND...THE EXHIBITS HAVE NOT BEEN PROPERLY PROTECTED BY THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE."

SHARP SAID THAT IF IT WAS FOUND THAT THE EXHIBITS HAD BEEN MISHANDLED, HE WOULD TAKE "APPROPRIATE ACTION" AGAINST ANY OF HIS EMPLOYES WHO WERE FOUND TO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY IRREGULARITIES.

HE SAID THE SIRHAN EXHIBITS, AND ANY OF THE 160,000 ITEMS IN THE CUSTODY OF HIS OFFICE, WERE UNDER "VERY, VERY STRICT CONTROL" AND COULD ONLY BE SEEN BY INVESTIGATE AGENCIES WITH A COURT ORDER.

SHARP SAID SEVERAL OF HIS EMPLOYEES HAD TAKEN LIE DETECTOR TESTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INVESTIGATION.

IE 1149AM